

Message Text

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21

ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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DRAFTED BY ARA/ECA:RCGRAHAM:RC

APPROVED BY ARA/ECA:RWZIMMERMANN

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R 020234Z DEC 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 293650

E.O. 11652: GDS

AGS: SHUM, PFOR, UY

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND ON RECENT ARREST OF PROMINENT
URUGUAYAN - RAUL ANTONIO LEGNANI DE VECCHI

1. JUAN FERREIRA CALLED DESK NOVEMBER 30 TO INFORM DEPART-
MENT OF RECENT ARREST OF DR. RAUL ANTONIO LEGNANI DE
VECCHI. THE DOCTOR WAS AMONG GROUP OF 64 WHICH FERREIRA
SAID WERE ARRESTED ON SEPTEMBER 25 IN CANELONES.

2. DR. LEGNANI DE VECCHI WAS DIRTCTOR OF THE CANELONES
HOSPITAL AT TIME OF HIS ARREST. HE IS DESCRIBED AS
BEING OVER 80 YEARS OLD. HE WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN
TRANSFERRED TO THE MILITARY HOSPITAL IN MONTEVIDEO ON
SEPTEMBER 27, AND FOR THAT REASON HIS FAMILY FEARS THAT
HE WAS SUBJECTED TO TORTURE AFTER HIS ARREST.

3. THE DOCTOR IS REPORTEDLY ACCUSED OF BEING A MEMBER OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY. IN 1966 ELECTIONS HE WAS A CANDIDATE
FOR CONGRESS ON COLORADO PARTY TICKET. FERREIRA STATED
THAT IN 1971 THE DOCTOR JOINED THE "LIST OF NINETY-NINE"
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GROUP, WHICH FERREIRA DESCRIBED AS HAVING A DISTINCT NON-

COMMUNIST ORIENTATION.

4. FERREIRA WAS ADVISED THAT THE EMBASSY IS LIMITED IN THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT CAN BE EFFECTIVE WITH REGARD TO URUGUAYAN CITIZENS. HE UNDERSTANDS, BUT BELIEVES THAT DR. LEGNANI DE VECCHI WOULD BENEFIT IN HIS TREATMENT BY THE URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES IF THEY WERE AWARE THAT HIS DETENTION IS KNOWN TO US. OTHERWISE FERREIRA BELIEVES THAT THE DOCTOR MAY NEVER BE SET FREE, AND SPECULATES THAT IT WOULD BE A SIMPLE MATTER FOR HIS DEATH TO BE ANNOUNCED DUE TO HIS ADVANCED AGE.

5. FERRIRA WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BRING THIS REPORT TO THE ATTENTION OF OTHER WASHINGTON CONTACTS. IN ANTICIPATION OF FURTHER INQUIRIES, THE EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO CHECK OUT THE REPORT TO THE EXTENT PRACTICAL.
ROBINSON

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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